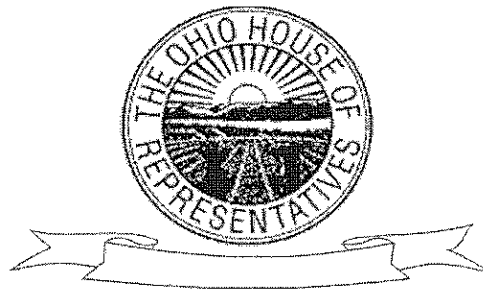


76th House District

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Assistant Majority Floor Leader

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Sponsor Testimony: House Bill 80
House Education and Career Readiness Committee
March 7, 2017

Chairman Brenner, Vice-chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the House Education and Career Readiness Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 80, legislation that will increase access to summer lunch programs for students across the state.

According to the Children's Hunger Alliance, 1 in 4 Ohio children live in food insecure households, meaning that they do not always know where their next meal is coming from. For many children, the breakfasts and lunches they receive at school are all they will eat that day. Thankfully, we know that the National School Lunch Program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to many children in need each school day. However, on average, only one in ten of the low-income children in Ohio who participate in the National School Lunch Program participate in a summer nutrition program. This is due, in large part, to some school districts need to "opt out" of the summer food requirement because their boards determine that they cannot comply for financial reasons.

House Bill 80 would allow school districts where at least one half of the students are eligible for free lunches to make their facilities available to an approved summer food service. By allowing a summer meal sponsor to partner with a school district that already qualifies for the federal Summer Food Service Program, we would be removing barriers that some of Ohio's children face to obtaining healthy food outside of the school year.

This legislation provides that a district may charge the summer food service program a fee, within reason, for the use of the school's facilities. This fee would only be permitted to cover custodial services, charges for the use of school equipment and a prorated share of utilities (which would be determined in advance, by the school district's board). Additionally, a summer meal sponsor must be named as insured under the school's liability insurance or demonstrate that the sponsor has liability insurance coverage of its own that has been approved by the school before operations may commence.

Summer nutrition programs serve as a bridge to fill the summer meal gap that so many children face each year, and also helps attract more children and teens to the summer enrichment programming needed to reduce summer learning loss. Increasing participation reduces food

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insecurity, poor nutritional intake, and the incidence of childhood obesity in Ohio, making the next generation healthier and better prepared for the beginning of their next school year.¹

Again, thank you Chair Brenner and members of the committee for taking the time to listen to sponsor testimony on House Bill 80. I want to give my joint sponsor an opportunity to speak to the bill, but am then more than happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.

¹ Children's Hunger Alliance, www.childrenshungeralliance.org/provider-services/summer-programs/